

# AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL VISION 2040

A United Vision for  
Australian Basketball



PHOTO: FIBA



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Basketball Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and play our game. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge we play our game on this land and respect the cultures of all First Peoples, their contribution to our nation and contribution to the game of Basketball.





# CONTENTS

Acknowledgment of Country .....	2
Introduction .....	4
Australian Basketball Vision .....	5
Everybody’s Game - Participation .....	10
A Place for All Australians to Play - Facilities .....	18
A Safe Space for All - Community and Culture .....	25
Competition Will Be Left On The Court - Leadership .....	32
Pathways To The World - Development Pathways .....	41
Staying On Top Of The World - High Performance .....	51
The Lifeblood Of The Game - Basketball’s People .....	60
Australian Basketball’s Identity - Brand and Communications .....	67





# OUR VISION

## Everybody's Game

By 2040 there will be more Australians:

- participating in basketball
- engaged as fans at all levels
- excelling around the world





# AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL VISION 2040

## Introduction

Basketball in Australia has experienced a renaissance. Participation rates are at an all-time high and the sport has become an integral part of Australian culture. Basketball reflects the nation's diversity and connects with people from all regions and backgrounds. Basketball is truly Everybody's Game.

This Vision is a bold, comprehensive plan aimed at ensuring basketball remains a key part of Australia's sporting landscape. Through collaboration, alignment, and strategic investment, the sport is set to reach new heights by 2040.

## Background

This Vision implements a key recommendation from the 2022 Basketball Australia Governance Review to establish a unified strategic vision for the sport. This Vision aims to align the sport through collaborative and accountable strategies for all basketball stakeholders. To create an inclusive vision, over 1,200 individuals were engaged through town halls, interviews, and surveys. Feedback from diverse communities and regions have shaped the Vision, ensuring a shared approach to achieving basketball's future success.

Australia's growing cultural diversity and ongoing urbanisation, positions basketball, more than any other sport, to meet the needs of a growing and changing population. With the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the horizon, Basketball Australia (BA) and the eight state and territory governing bodies are therefore setting out this Australian Basketball Vision (Vision) to position the sport for sustainable growth.

*Quotes from individuals are included throughout this document to reflect and emphasise the sentiment of the Australian basketball community. These quotes were obtained by Alacria Global through the consultation phase of this project. This was a confidential process to obtain open and honest feedback and the quotes are therefore not attributed to any individual.*





# BASKETBALL VISION

Building on strong foundations, by 2040, basketball will be Australia's largest team sport. To achieve this goal, Australian basketball will see increased participation rates, stronger fan engagement, and Australian athletes, teams and officials recognised and excelling on the global stage. The goal is for basketball to be embraced by Australians at all levels, in all regions and across all demographics.

The Vision sets out 39 objectives across eight categories:

- Participation
- Facilities
- Community and Culture
- Leadership
- Development Pathways
- High Performance
- Basketball's People
- Brand and Communications

All 39 objectives also include measurable actions that will support implementation and enable ongoing progress reporting and review.

PHOTO: FIBA

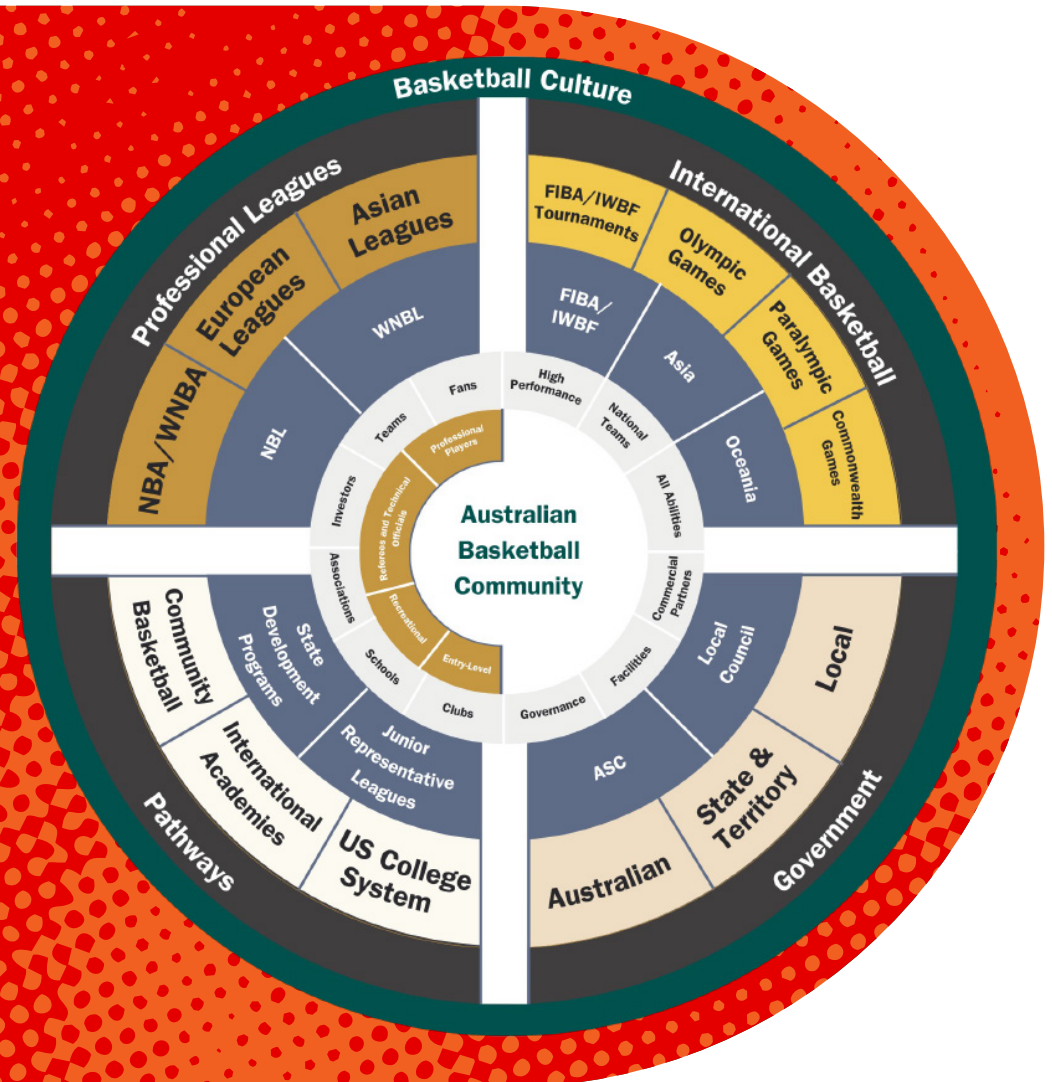
A key focus for the sport will be growth in participation, facilitated by improved facilities, and better infrastructure to support the sport's expansion. Importantly, participant experience, culture and safety will also be key foundations for the sport to grow.

Sustainable on court success will remain a key priority for the sport. International success will be underpinned by the evolution and continual improvement of world's best development pathways and high-performance programs across the ecosystem. Basketball will celebrate and communicate its success to ensure the basketball community are connected and engaged to inspire the next generation of athletes, officials and fans.



# BASKETBALL ECOSYSTEM

Australian basketball operates within a complex ecosystem, with various formats, leagues, and communities all playing key roles in the operations and governance of the sport. Australian basketball includes the domestic governing bodies (BA and the eight State and Territories), community level competitions and programs managed by local associations and clubs, domestic professional and elite level leagues (NBL, WNBL, NWBL, WNWBL and NBL1), global governing bodies (FIBA and IWBF) and it is also an Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sport. In addition, the NBA is one of the most prominent, popular and successful global sporting brands. For the sport to maximise its potential and to achieve this Vision, it is vital for all segments of the game to work together. This Vision is therefore underpinned by a strong focus on collaboration and aligning interests.





# STRATEGIC HORIZONS

The Vision is divided into two key phases: pre and post Brisbane 2032. The Vision will be reviewed in 2032 to assess progress and set new targets. It also includes four strategic phases to guide the alignment of organisational strategies toward the collective Vision.

## AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL 2040 VISION

**Horizon 1**  
Pre-Brisbane 2032



**Horizon 2**  
Post-Brisbane 2032

**Phase 1**  
2026-2028



**Phase 2**  
2028-2032



**Phase 3**  
2032-2036



**Phase 4**  
2036-2040



## **PARTICIPANTS ARE NOT JUST PLAYERS**

In this Vision, the term 'Participants' refers to all active contributors to a game, e.g. players, coaches, referees, bench officials, statisticians and other staff and volunteers. At times specific reference is made to roles where an initiative is designed to address a group, such as coaching initiatives.







# **EVERYBODY'S GAME** PARTICIPATION





## EVERYBODY'S GAME

Participation – the people who play, coach, officiate, administer and coordinate basketball across the country

Basketball is Australia's second largest team-based participation sport, and the third largest for women (AusPlay, 2024). Basketball has reached this position through a range of key strengths:

- Basketball is inclusive and played by everyone, irrespective of ability, gender and culture.
- Basketball is a shared experience that creates communities.
- Basketball is physically safe. It is a contact sport but not a collision sport and is considered a safer option by parents than many other sports.
- Basketball is played indoors in controlled environments. It is not cancelled when it rains, nor is it played in the hot sun.
- Basketball is a global sport, loved around the world. It plays a uniting role across communities and cultures.
- Basketball's culture transcends the game; immersed in fashion, music and so much more.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Basketball's strengths position the sport to achieve its Vision. However, the game also faces increasing competition for a share of people's leisure time, and it must therefore offer a valuable proposition to participants.

Participation is the foundation of every sport's success. It creates an affinity for the sport that cultivates lifelong participants and fans. With the competition amongst sports for participants greater than ever, basketball's future success starts with ensuring it offers great participation experiences to all Australians.

Basketball is therefore committed to ensuring participation programs are successful by offering attractive opportunities to all Australians. Clubs and Associations need players, referees, officials, coaches and volunteers to function and grow. BA, the states and territories and elite level leagues need a large funnel of players to create the next professional athletes, gold medal winning Opals, Boomers, Rollers, Gliders and Gangurru. The basketball ecosystem also needs the next generation of fans to fill stadiums, buy merchandise, watch broadcast/streams and engage with digital content.

To achieve its Vision for Participation, basketball will need to be flexible. Australians are choosing to participate in sport in different ways and basketball must offer programs that suit the evolving needs of the community. Basketball will also need to work effectively with schools to introduce basketball to students and connect them with places to play outside school within the broader basketball ecosystem.





# VISION

Basketball will be Australia's largest team sport with people of all ages and abilities readily participating in the sport.

## How we will achieve this:

Basketball will provide varying forms of the game that facilitate skill development, health and fitness, competition, social connection and fun. The game will offer participants a fun, shared social experience with family and friends.

Australian basketball will embrace different formats to become more accessible throughout a person's life. This includes embracing and evolving formats such as walking basketball and 3x3.

The game will remain affordable.

A strategy for growth and sport development in remote and regional areas will be developed to extend the sport's impact throughout Australia.





## VISION

Membership and participation models will fit the evolving needs of Australians.

### How we will achieve this:

Basketball will continuously review and improve membership and participation models to evolve options to suit the participants of 2040.

Membership and participation models will reflect the way participants want to play the game, providing greater flexibility and value.





## VISION

Basketball will be Australia's most participated team sport by girls and women.

### How we will achieve this:

Basketball will be seen as a truly gender-neutral sport with equal opportunities to participate in all roles, at all levels.

Australian basketball will develop an aligned national approach that ensures girls and women have equal access to quality playing and changing facilities.

The sport will develop female referees and coaches to ensure role models are front and centre at every court around the country.

Basketball will provide tailored national pathway options for girls which reflect their development paths.

Our Women and Girl's Strategies will be continually improved to position basketball as a best practice sport for the inclusion, support and development of women and girls.







## VISION

A truly national support team will enhance the participant experience.

### How we will achieve this:

Basketball will develop a nationally aligned and trained workforce to deliver participation and training programs.

A whole of sport shared services model will be developed and implemented to ensure the sport is delivered in an efficient, cost effective and participant centred manner.



## VISION

Closer partnerships with schools will increase participant transition to clubs and associations.

### How we will achieve this:

Basketball will support schools with programs, training and coaching resources that increase teacher knowledge of the game to grow school-based basketball participation.

Basketball will develop a toolkit for Clubs and Associations to work productively with schools to create an easy transition of players from schools into clubs.







# **A PLACE FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS TO PLAY** FACILITIES



## A PLACE FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS TO PLAY

Facilities – where we play the game.

The greatest issue for the Australian basketball community is the shortage of suitable playing facilities. In NSW alone, there is a waiting list of 155,000 people. The facility shortage is compounded by the large number of old, rundown and outdated facilities, which lack basic, modern amenities and provide participants with a poorer experience.

A key advantage for basketball is being an indoor sport, which is less impacted by heat, rain and other weather events. However, it also becomes a constraint if facility development does not keep up with demand as it is difficult to find alternative places to play. Many suitable basketball facilities are also multi-sport and multi-use venues which means basketball is competing for court access time. Basketball will therefore need significant investment in facilities and to optimise how those facilities are used to achieve its participation targets.



**“Our issue is not participation, it’s accommodating everyone who wants to play.”**



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The demand to play basketball is already greater than the supply of available facilities across the country. The basketball community's clear need is therefore more, larger and modernised facilities.

Basketball facilities require ongoing investment to build, upgrade and maintain. Like all sports, the game is reliant upon external funding to support infrastructure development to play the game. Basketball is generally reliant on facility funding through four key areas:



To achieve its Vision, the sport will need to optimise how it engages with this group of facility investors and identify other potential new facility partners. For example, as Australia's population continues to grow, new residential and commercial developments will create opportunities to partner with developers to build community and commercial hubs incorporating basketball facilities.

Whilst the sport has positioned itself as an indoor game, the use of outdoor and non-traditional courts also needs to be considered. Basketball's street hoops culture, particularly in the US, shows the game can be played almost anywhere. Development of outdoor 3x3 courts, for example, would allow facility development in locations where a full-size, indoor court may not be feasible.





# VISION

Every Australian will have access to a fit-for-purpose basketball facility.

## How we will achieve this:

A well-maintained national facilities audit will ensure basketball collectively understands the existing basketball infrastructure in Australia.

A national facilities strategy will be utilised at all levels to work proactively with governments and other parties to identify and prioritise facility gaps.

Basketball will develop cost modelling for different types of basketball facilities to ensure they are cost effective and provide value for money.

A development plan for outdoor courts, including smaller 3x3 style courts, will be developed to identify more affordable options to supplement full-size indoor courts.

Basketball will develop an online resource to better operate and utilise available facilities.

Basketball will advocate for the inclusion of basketball facilities within other major development projects.





## VISION

There will be an aligned national approach to engage productively with government about facility development.

### How we will achieve this:

The sport will present a cohesive plan through a united voice to promote the role basketball facilities can play to help improve communities. This will include the role basketball facilities play in providing a safe, welcoming environment; promoting healthy lifestyles to reduce pressure on health budgets; creating a welcoming 'third place' for young people to spend time; contributing to positive social outcomes; and delivering a community hub that embraces and celebrates diversity and cultural integration.

Basketball will be an active contributor to local communities.





## VISION

Basketball will collaborate with schools to increase and enhance facility development and optimise facility use.

### How we will achieve this:

The basketball community will work with education departments and local government to attract facility investment through shared use.

Basketball will develop a guide to ensure school facilities are designed to adequately support the needs of the sport, which will include the minimum standards required to enable optimised facility use.







## **VISION**

The value basketball facilities can deliver developers and other businesses will be leveraged to build an engagement strategy.

### **How we will achieve this:**

Basketball will develop a clear value proposition to benefit from investment in new residential and commercial developments required to support population growth.





# **A SAFE SPACE FOR ALL** COMMUNITY AND CULTURE



## A SAFE SPACE FOR ALL

Community and Culture – what we stand for and how we engage with the sport

The Australian basketball community sees itself as welcoming, diverse, inclusive and progressive. These self-identified traits will enable basketball to establish itself as the leader in safe and inclusive sport participation.

Basketball's global base also means it is extremely well positioned to be a uniting force in Australian society. The sport has taken steps to embrace this opportunity and with greater focus, commitment and investment, the future players, coaches, referees, volunteers and administrators will be further engaged to embed and reinforce a strong culture across the game.

If basketball is to achieve its goals, it will continue to embrace the diverse cultures of the country, from First Nations to refugees and other new arrivals seeking a safe, welcoming country in which to live.





## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Whilst basketball is a competitive sport, respect must always be at the core of how the game is played. To be a sport of choice for Australian families, their experiences must reflect the Play-Well doctrine and align with their values. Whilst not unique to basketball, abuse of referees and coaches is an issue that will need to be addressed consistently by the sport at all levels. Parent and spectator behaviour at junior basketball also needs to be an ongoing focal point.

Australian sport has also reframed how Australia's international success will be gaged through the lens of not just winning but winning well in a manner that all Australians can be proud of. Basketball is well positioned to lead the way amongst Australian sports to live the Win-Well and Play-Well doctrines.

Similarly, the sport needs to embrace diversity across its leadership if it is to truly represent Australia in 2040. Just as kids seek to emulate the stars on the court, so too future potential leaders of the sport need to see themselves reflected in the game's leadership.





# VISION

Basketball will be recognised as the leading Australian sport for providing a safe space for all participants.

## How we will achieve this:

Basketball will develop and implement an holistic Safe Sport Framework. The Framework will be established collaboratively with all key stakeholders and implemented with a continual improvement mindset.

Safety, both physical and psychological, will be seen as a key pillar of basketball's value proposition to attract and retain participants. Australian's will choose basketball because it is safe, welcoming and inclusive at its core.

Systems to reward and recognise good practice within the sport will be established.







## VISION

A culture of respect will exist at all levels of the game.

### How we will achieve this:

A national approach to respect will be established and embedded from the national teams and leagues to local club games and programs.

National teams' and leagues' players, coaches and officials will be supported to become role models to the basketball community.

Basketball will promote two-way respect for officials, from players, coaches and fans.

There will be national guidelines for referees, and other officials, to respond to disrespectful behaviour at all levels.

Behaviour and respect towards referees will be led and role modelled from the top through the professional leagues.



## VISION

Diversity, equity and inclusion will be embedded within the heart of basketball, ensuring that all members of the basketball community feel valued, and that basketball serves as a catalyst for positive social change.

### How we will achieve this:

A national diversity, equity and inclusion strategy will provide clear steps for all levels of the game. It will be supported by nationally aligned resources operating across each state and territory.

Leadership at all levels of the game will represent the diversity of the Australian community. Basketball will develop an approach to actively develop, include and embrace all people, cultures and abilities to ensure the game's leadership reflects the community it represents.

Basketball will create national programs and resources which encourage diversity in non-playing roles, such as officiating and coaching.







## VISION

Basketball will expand its influence as a unifying force within Australian communities.

### How we will achieve this:

Basketball will be proactive in building Australian communities, developing and contributing to programs that welcome newly arrived Australians, helping them to create a new home with a familiar game.

Basketball will facilitate social connection among communities through operating models that promote clubs and associations as community and social hubs, not just play and leave experiences.



**COMPETITION WILL BE  
LEFT ON THE COURT  
LEADERSHIP**





## COMPETITION WILL BE LEFT ON THE COURT

**Leadership – working together in the best interests of the sport**

Throughout the consultation process to develop this Vision, it became clear there is frustration in the basketball community about the fractured way the game is run in Australia. This approach generally reflects past requirements not current or future realities.

It is accepted that a federated governance structure is the ongoing model for basketball, however the way the model has worked has not always allowed the game to reach its full potential.

To achieve its objectives, Australian basketball therefore needs an operating system which promotes consistency, optimisation of resources, recognition that experience and knowledge is spread around the country, and acceptance by all that protecting self-interest is not in the best interests of the game overall. The sport therefore requires genuine collaboration and partnership across all levels of the game.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A foundation of this Vision is to unite the Australian basketball community to work together in the best interests of the game. The greatest risk to this Vision is people and organisations within the system, from BA right through to community clubs, prioritising their own short-term interests over the longer-term good of the sport. To succeed, everyone will need to contribute but also be prepared to adapt how they operate.

Australian sport has historically suffered from a lack of co-ordination and consistency between national, state and territory governing bodies within the federated model. While this is changing, it often remains the case in basketball, which has many variations in policies, procedures, rules, technology systems, registration platforms and many other elements. In most instances, the inconsistent approach is inefficient and costly, which ultimately flows down to the participants. Duplication, inconsistency and inefficiency are therefore major frustrations within the basketball community.

The interrelationships between private league and club ownership groups and the federated governing bodies are another important element in aligning the sport. The current approach is not optimal with the federated governing bodies and professional leagues too often acting in competition with each other, including competing events, programs, community engagement and talent pathways. This internal misalignment and competition ultimately diminishes the overall value of the sport. The role of the professional leagues and clubs in the governance of Australian basketball should connect with and support the broader basketball community. This alignment is critical to the basketball's long-term success. The roles and responsibilities of the professional leagues therefore need to align with the broader interests of the sport in Australia if the sport is to reach its potential.





# VISION

A fit for purpose governance and business model will meet the needs of participants.

## How we will achieve this:

Basketball will develop a nationally aligned operating model that ensures local administrators are supported and empowered to make decisions and that information readily flows up and down the system to ensure continual improvement.

Roles and responsibilities at each level of the game will be maintained and aligned to achieving this vision.

The financial structure of the sport will be fit for purpose with sufficient funding allocated to enable each entity to deliver effectively on its roles and responsibilities.

Australian basketball will develop new revenue sources by evaluating the value of its collective skills and resources. Initiatives may include facilities management services, monetising national, state and/or local homes for basketball, exporting high performance and other IP, and offering services to other sports.







## VISION

A nationally consistent operational approach will be supported by nationally aligned resources.

### How we will achieve this:

Nationally agreed core rules and policies will be adopted to bring consistency to playing and administering the game.

A participant first approach to online systems will be adopted nationally, recognising the game is played across the country with a regular flow of participants across borders.

A national digital repository will be established and regularly updated. This will include resources for clubs and associations including playing rules and regulations, policies, guides for establishing clubs and associations, assistance in accessing government grants and other documentation.



## **VISION**

BA and the states and territories will focus on the services they deliver to members and participants.

### **How we will achieve this:**

BA will operate a national support centre for the game, supporting its members, the professional leagues, associations and clubs.

BA and the States and Territories will avoid duplicating services wherever possible.







## VISION

Collaboration between the professional leagues and governing bodies will improve the game for members, participants and fans.

### How we will achieve this:

The professional leagues and governing bodies will understand their interdependence and operate to agreed roles and responsibilities for the betterment of all.

The roles and responsibilities will promote collaboration to grow the game for everybody's benefit, not just individual stakeholders.



# VISION

The basketball community will have a clear voice through to the governing bodies.

## How we will achieve this:

BA and the states and territories will develop mechanisms and forums to maximise the opportunity for regular engagement from all participants.





## **VISION**

Service and decision making will be data led to meet community needs.

### **How we will achieve this:**

A national data management strategy will be developed.

A data management solution facilitating proactive analysis of data and application of learnings, will allow the game to identify and react early to trends and needs across the country, enhancing the service provided by BA and the states and territories to their members.

The sport will embrace new technologies to improve systems and processes across the sport.







# **PATHWAYS TO THE WORLD**

## DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS




## PATHWAYS TO THE WORLD

Development Pathways – the programs and systems to develop our participants from the community level towards High Performance

Central to Australian basketball's existing status is its strong record of developing world class talent. In the 1990's, after decades of investment and coinciding with a major boom in interest, Australia emerged with a Women's World Cup medal on the way to a gold in 2006. At the same time, the first wave of NBA players led by Luc Longley and Andrew Gaze arrived in the biggest league on Earth, a pathway which continues to this day.

With record numbers of Australians playing in the NBA and WNBA and national teams consistently competing for medals at major tournaments, the current pathway is clearly working. However, with other basketball nations continuing to improve, the pathway must also evolve to meet the needs of the next generation and compete on the international stage.



**“For me, success is providing the game’s athletes at all levels the best opportunity to succeed, both on and off the court”**





## PATHWAYS TO THE WORLD (CONTINUED)

The continued ability of Australian basketball to develop world class talent and provide a pathway for our best players to fulfill their dreams is a priority for the game. Seeing Australian elite talent on the world stage is a motivator for girls and boys to play the game, it feeds talent into the national leagues and is a key component of Australian basketball culture. It is also important to basketball's political relevance.

Each level of the game has an important role to play in identifying and developing talent. At the local level, associations select and develop representative teams from local clubs. The states and territories identify, select and develop development program players, which feed into their own representative teams. At the national level, BA manage national camps and the identification, selection and development of scholarship athletes at the Centre of Excellence. This pathway ultimately leads to professional opportunities and national team selection.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are diverse views on the structure of basketball's pathways with many stakeholders playing a role in delivering the various programs that exist. All stakeholders agree that maintaining a successful pathway is a priority for the sport.

Basketball operates in a global marketplace where talented girls and boys have options to develop their talent within Australia and overseas. Through the various options, there is a balance between developing each individual into a professional athlete who can play in leagues around the globe and developing athletes to play the Australian way to create successful national teams. The success of Australia's national teams remains a key priority for the sport and is the primary purpose of the pathway.

**“We need to facilitate the opportunity to make the best choice for each individual's needs - not prescriptive options - there is enough pressure on them, give them the ability to make good choices along the ability to talk to the right advisors.”**



## VISION

Australia will provide talented players with the world's best player development pathway options.

### How we will achieve this:

A framework of pathway options will be established to identify clear choices for emerging talent. This will enable players and their families to make informed decisions.

Australian basketball will actively monitor global development trends to provide qualified and informed guidance to emerging athletes through trusted advisors, such as former players and coaches, focused on needs and outcomes.







## VISION

Junior pathways will be affordable and accessible to all Australians.

### How we will achieve this:

Junior development pathways will be clearly identified, affordable, accessible and inclusive for all, including wheelchair players and those with an intellectual disability.

Pathways will focus on developing talent in a fun and safe environment. The motivators of sports participation, such as fun and shared social experiences, do not stop once a player is selected for a representative team or a development squad.

Parents, athletes and coaches who enter the pathway system will be educated about what makes a successful player, which is more than just raw talent.

Pathways and development programs will be accessible throughout the country, including in regional and remote areas.

Partnerships with schools will ensure talent is not missed because it is not part of the traditional basketball system.



## VISION

More, well trained coaches will be available for pathway programs and teams.

### How we will achieve this:

Coaches will be qualified and continually upskilled to deliver development programs at the age group and level to which they are appointed. Training will include education in the culture and behaviours expected from everyone in the game.

Coaches will be educated to deliver a national curriculum including a diversity of playing styles to allow players to adapt the style of play of their own team and to combat the style of play of their opposition.







## VISION

Pathways will prioritise player and official development.

### How we will achieve this:

A review of state and national tournaments will be undertaken to evaluate if their current structures are delivering the best possible outcomes for the players and officials participating, and that they are optimally fulfilling their role to identify and develop talent, including individual development.

Australian basketball will embrace and align with Australian sport's vision to win well to inspire Australians.



## VISION

Australian technical officials will be given the opportunity to be world class.

### How we will achieve this:

An education and development system will be established to ensure that Australian technical officials are receiving the most up to date training and achieving world's best standards. This will include ensuring that appropriate technological advancements are integrated into the role of technical officials and appropriate training is provided.





## VISION

Australian basketball will provide referees with a clear pathway from green shirt to international appointment.

### How we will achieve this

Basketball will introduce a clear national development pathway for referees, from their first education course through to FIBA, IWBF and Virtis Games event opportunities. This will include using domestic tournaments and other events as a core part of referee development.

Australia's leading referees will play an ambassadorial role for the next generation of referees.

There will be opportunities for international refereeing educational tours and experiences to grow the knowledge base and international experience of Australian referees.







# **STAYING ON TOP OF THE WORLD** HIGH PERFORMANCE



# STAYING ON TOP OF THE WORLD

High Performance – how we sustain success on the international stage

Australians are justifiably proud of their national basketball teams. The Gliders led the way for Australian Basketball, winning the country's first medal at a major international tournament in 1994, closely followed by the Rollers' Paralympic gold in 1996. The Opals have won World Cup and Olympic medals consistently since the 1990's, whilst the Boomer's first Olympic or World Cup medal at Tokyo 2020 was celebrated around the nation after 5 semi-final losses over 30 years.

Australia has hosted two FIBA Women's Basketball World Cups in 1994 and 2022, two IWBf World Wheelchair Basketball Championships in 1986 and 1998 and will host its third Olympic and second Paralympic basketball tournaments in Brisbane 2032.

Australia is a basketball nation. Its success on the court, track record of hosting major tournaments and ability to develop world class talent provides it with respect and influence on the world stage. Sport has traditionally been the measure of global relevance for many Australians. On this measure, Australian basketball has delivered consistently for decades.

PHOTO: FIBA





## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As a truly global sport, basketball continues to become more competitive as countries invest in development of the game. The growth in NBA players born outside the US, from 23 players hailing from 18 countries in 1991-92 to 125 international players from 40 countries at the opening of the 2023-24 NBA season, is a demonstration of the sport's international growth.

The integration of internationals into the NBA and the WNBA, has raised the standard of the game around the world, particularly in Australia given the number of players it has contributed to both leagues. It also means that the competition for medals at major championships has increased greatly.

To continue to compete and succeed, Australia will need more resources, particularly given its distance from the other major basketball destinations in Europe and North America. Improved standards and greater competition in Asia, will help reduce some of the tyranny of distance with the performance of the Chinese and Japanese women's teams at recent World Cups and Olympic Games demonstrating that Asia is emerging as a more competitive basketball market. This is a reminder to Australian basketball that the challenges to its ongoing success come not only onshore but from its competitors around the world.

The reliance on government funding of high-performance programs leaves basketball subject to the political whims of incumbent governments. This is a significant risk to the high-performance program, particularly post Brisbane 2032, when government funding may plateau or decline in real terms.





## VISION

The national Centre of Excellence will be a world's best facility and the pinnacle of the Australian pathway.

### How we will achieve this:

The sport will continue to invest in the Centre of Excellence, which will be the pinnacle of the Australian pathway. Continuous review and improvement of its structures will be undertaken to ensure it remains world leading. This will include developing options to include wheelchair, 3x3 and ID talent.







## VISION

Australian Basketball will understand and leverage the value of its talent development IP.

### How we will achieve this:

Australian basketball will capture, own and use its basketball IP to develop future generations of talent.

Australian basketball will capture and continuously improve its IP to maintain a curriculum for the sport that can be used to further develop coaches, players and officials in Australia.

The sport will explore opportunities to export its IP to developing basketball nations.



## VISION

Winning well on the world stage will be a national endeavour.

### How we will achieve this:

Australia's national teams will remain the pinnacle of the game in Australia and their performance will be a key measure of success for the sport overall.

Australia's senior national teams will be ranked in the top 5 globally and challenge for medals at all major tournaments.







## VISION

An Australian style of play (for each discipline) will be recognised and provide a competitive advantage on the international stage.

### How we will achieve this:

Australian teams will play a style that reflects the skills of the players as well as the traditional determination that has long been associated with the country's teams and players.



## VISION

Australia's national teams will be supported with access to world leading services.

### How we will achieve this:

With the increase in the competitiveness of the international game, BA will provide state of the art technology and support services to monitor players across the globe to ensure that when they return to the national teams, they have world class sports science and services to compete at their best.







## **VISION**


Australian basketball will own its own high-performance homes.

### **How we will achieve this:**

Basketball will develop a home for the sport to be the training base for national teams and the home of the Centre of Excellence, creating a high-performance hub which supports the state and territory pathway programs.

Each state will have its own home of basketball, which will be the hub for the state or territory player, coach and referee pathway programs, provide support services to associations and host tournaments.





# **THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE GAME** BASKETBALL'S PEOPLE



## THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE GAME

**Basketball's People** – the volunteers, administrators and officials who deliver the game to the community

Basketball runs on the passion and dedication of the people that play and facilitate the games. Without referees, coaches, technical officials and volunteers, basketball would not be in the position it is today. Equally it will not be able to grow without retaining those who give their time and by attracting more people to fill these roles. Technology may assist in reducing the workload and may replace some positions, however, the reality is that at community level, the sport will remain reliant on people who give their time to allow others to play.

Each of these roles also has a substantial impact on participant experience. They influence enjoyment of the game, as well as how participants develop as players and people. Ensuring those who fill these roles are properly and regularly trained, are given the systems and support they need to be their best and are recognised for their contribution, will be an important focus for leaders at all levels of the game.





## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The culture of volunteering in Australia is under enormous pressure. This is in part due to generational changes in the way Australians commit their time and how they value service to others. However, it also reflects volunteers having been taken for granted and not being recognised for their contribution. Recognition is a growing part of the value proposition for volunteers, and basketball needs to consider both this and how it can positively influence the other motivators for volunteers, such as social engagement.

Replacing volunteer roles, including coaches and technical officials, with paid personnel is a solution that will work for some clubs and associations. However, this approach will impact the affordability of the game, potentially pushing participants out of the sport. Basketball is also seeking to create social and community connection and engagement, which can be facilitated through high levels of volunteerism. Nationally aligned solutions will be required to support individual clubs and associations to solve this issue.







## OFFICIALS – REFEREES, BENCH OFFICIALS AND STATISTICIANS

No referees, no basketball. That is the importance of all officials and a fact that needs to be more readily recognised by those who play and coach.

Refereeing is a critical part of the game, and quality refereeing has a major impact on the experience of participants, coaches and parents. There are 22,500 registered referees in 2024 who must be retained in the sport, as well as many more added every year if the participant growth target is to be achieved.

Whilst referees are paid, many can earn more money in other jobs. Passion for the role and the game is therefore a core part of the value proposition for a referee. This is significant and simply paying more is not the answer to giving referees a better experience and growing their numbers.

Bench officials and statisticians tend to be volunteers, particularly parents, at club and association levels, however, there is an ongoing need for trained, accredited technical officials at senior levels of the sport.

## COACHES

Coaches have a greater influence on participant experience than any other group. However, at local club level they are often parents and can be the least trained or experienced people involved in a game. The impact they can have on the physical and emotional development of young players requires the game to consider how it develops and accredits coaches.

## VISION

Volunteers will be respected and recognised as key contributors to the game.

### How we will achieve this:

A national approach to recognise and reward volunteers will be developed to assist associations and clubs to attract and retain personnel. This will include understanding the motivations of volunteers and delivering a plan to enhance the value of volunteering.

The game will commit to reducing the administrative burden of volunteering by removing inefficiencies and making it easier to be a volunteer.







## VISION

Referees will be recognised as part of the team for the key role they play in the sport at all levels.

### How we will achieve this:

Referees will be treated as part of the team to provide a sense of camaraderie in the game and social connection.

Australian basketball will invest in a data management system that allows it to better understand the location and profile of referees to ensure the sport has adequate numbers to support the sport across the country.



# VISION

Australian basketball will have sufficient accredited coaches to support the number of players and teams.

## How we will achieve this:

Basketball will prioritise ensuring all volunteer coaches understand the respectful, positive culture of the game and the need to ensure players have fun and develop core skills.

A culture will be promoted which measures coaching success on the player experience, not winning and losing.

The attraction, retention and development of coaches will be a priority for the game and their contributions will be actively recognised.

Committed club coaches will have a clear pathway for advancement both through additional online courses and opportunities to attend coaching forums or to step into representative or other programs.

Access will be provided to coaching support services at national and state level, commensurate with their role.

A support network of coaching educators and mentors will be available to assist the ongoing development of coaches. They will ensure both the high quality of coach education around the country, as well as providing an ongoing support resource for advice and guidance.

National team coaches will host sessions to share knowledge and aid the development of pathways coaches as well as educate on the game style and other aspects being used for national teams.

As part of their accreditation, advanced coaches will play an active role in mentoring those working their way to the advanced level.

Opportunities for international coaching educational tours and experiences will be facilitated to grow the knowledge base and international experience of Australian coaches.







# **AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL'S IDENTITY**

## BRAND AND COMMUNICATIONS

# AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL'S IDENTITY

## Brand & Communications

The Australian basketball community are proud of their sport and have grand aspirations for Australian basketball.

The sport has a large support base. There are 1.59m participants who play the game and 4m Australian basketball fans. This is a substantial group of people for the game to engage and use as ambassadors, noting one of the key motivations to start playing basketball is doing so with family and friends.

Basketball also needs to use this base as a substantial group of advocates for government and third-party investment. The size of the basketball community can help persuade government to increase infrastructure investment and provide other support.

To galvanise this support, the game needs to communicate with its base, engage it and develop an identity or brand of the game that reflects their aspirations for Australian basketball.



**“Basketball needs to sell the characters, people, tell stories, sell a point of difference - the diehards are already converted.”**



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Basketball is a major participation sport in Australia and its professional leagues are amongst the highest profile. However, basketball is not a member of the Coalition of Major Professional and Participation Sports, the leading sport lobby group in Australia, despite having more participants than all but one member and more successful leagues than many. Membership of a group such as this provides relevance and a level of respect in the sports industry to which the basketball community aspires and provides an enhanced ability to influence government.

To achieve a united identity and brand for the game, BA, the states and territories, local associations and leagues need to work together. This does not mean that each cannot have their own emblems and positioning, but that they propagate the overall brand of basketball as part of their communication.

Basketball's pinnacle brands are the national teams, its strongest retail brands are the NBA, WNBA, NBL, WNBL and their teams. Participation, however, lacks a consistent national brand. There is an opportunity to link all of these and benefit from each lifting the others.



## VISION

Australian basketball will have a unified brand position that resonates with fans, participants and the Australian public.

### How we will achieve this:

Basketball will develop a unified brand positioning and identity. It will provide all elements of the game with a clear brand purpose, values, personality and attributes from which subsidiary brands can be developed. This will be created through a collaborative approach across the game and utilise the most appropriate resources available within the game, irrespective of within which body they are based.







## **VISION**

Basketball will recognise and nurture the sport's cultural impact on Australian society.

### **How we will achieve this:**

For basketball to achieve a greater leadership position in Australian sport, the game will recognise and nurture its role in Australian culture.

Basketball will engage with younger generations to influence future sport choices by connecting with the cultural impact of basketball, supported by fashion, music and other influences.

## **VISION**

The sport will be open, transparent and timely with its communication.

### **How we will achieve this:**

The sport will engage its constituents through open, regular communication, utilising communication channels accessible to all.

A national communications platform will be provided to support states, territories, associations and clubs.





# VISION

Basketball will be a storyteller.

## How we will achieve this:

Across the game, basketball will build its ability to tell its stories on its own channels as well as through the media. It will develop the profile of players, leagues and teams at all levels. It will celebrate its role as an Australian sports leader on the world stage, transferring Australia's achievements and respect in global basketball back to its Australian audience.



## VISION

Australia's national teams will be nationally recognised brands that connect and resonate with the Australian public.

### How we will achieve this:

Australia's national teams will play around the nation, giving more basketball fans the opportunity to see their favourite players take the court in person.

Australia will seek to host FIBA and IWBf events on a regular basis to engage the basketball community and promote the national teams.

The success of our national teams will be leveraged to grow the game for the benefit of the entire basketball community.





# AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL VISION 2040